

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/911,840

Applicant(s)

CUMERALTO ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Khanh Tran

2611

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to the Amendment filed on 05/01/2007.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 15-18, 20-26 and 28, which have been renumbered as claims 1-12, respectively.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None of the:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of
Paper No./Mail Date ____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date ____.
7. Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. Other ____.

1. The Amendment filed on 05/01/2007 has been entered. Claims 15-18, 20-26 and 28 are pending in this Office action.
2. Claims 15-18, 20-26 and 28 have been renumbered as claims 1-12, respectively.

Response to Arguments

3. Applicant's arguments, see Applicants' Remarks, filed on 05/01/2007, with respect to claims 17-18, 20-21, 24-26 and 28 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The rejection of claims 17-18, 20-21, 24-26 and 28 has been withdrawn.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

4. Regarding claim 15, claim 15 is allowable over prior art of record because the cited references (e.g. Partyka U.S. Patent 6,188,715 B1) do not teach or suggest the uniquely distinct features "*predicting, by the receiver, whether the future second transmission will be unsuccessful based on the first set of determined frequency hopping information*" and "*responding to a predicted unsuccessful future second transmission by adjusting the communicating between the first end point module and the receiver*".

5. Regarding claim 17, the pending claim is patentably distinct from Partyka U.S. Patent 6,188,715 B1 in that the pending claim performs the combination of steps of "determining a message arrival time for a future first message ..." and "predicting, by the first reader, whether the first message will be successfully communicated" and "adjusting reception activity of the first reader according to a result of the predicting".

6. Regarding claim 22, claim 22 is allowable over prior art of record because the cited references (e.g. Partyka U.S. Patent 6,188,715 B1) do not teach or suggest the uniquely distinct features "predict whether the future second transmission will be unsuccessful based on the first set of determined frequency hopping information" and "respond to a predicted unsuccessful future second transmission by adjusting the radio communications between the first end point module".

7. Regarding claim 24, the pending claim is patentably distinct from Partyka U.S. Patent 6,188,715 B1 in that the pending claim performs the combination of steps of "determining an arrival time for a future first transmission ..." and "produce a prediction whether the first message will be successfully communicated" and "adjust operation of the receiver according to the prediction".

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably

accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Khanh Tran whose telephone number is 571-272-3007. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Friday from 08:00 AM - 05:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jay Patel can be reached on 571-272-2988. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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05/10/2007

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Primary Examiner, AU 2611

Application No. 09/911,840

15. (Previously Presented) In an automatic meter reading (AMR) system comprising a plurality of utility meter end point modules that generate and transmit utility consumption data, and at least one AMR system receiver configured to receive consumption data transmitted by the end point modules by way of frequency hopping spread spectrum transmission, a method of communicating between a first end point module and the receiver, the method comprising:

maintaining, at the receiver, transmission profile information for the first end point module that represents at least a frequency hopping pattern used by the first end point module;

transmitting, by the first end point module, a first message, wherein the first message includes an identifier of the first end point module;

receiving, by the receiver, the first message;

determining, by the receiver, an identity of the first end point module based on the identifier of the first message to obtain a first determined identity;

determining, by the receiver, frequency hopping information associated with a future second transmission by the first end point module based on the first determined identity of the first end point module to obtain a first set of determined frequency hopping information;

predicting, by the receiver, whether the future second transmission will be unsuccessful based on the first set of determined frequency hopping information; and

responding to a predicted unsuccessful future second transmission by adjusting the communicating between the first end point module and the receiver.

Application No. 09/911,840

*16.**2*
(Previously Presented) The method of claim 15, further comprising:

transmitting, by a second end point module, a third message, wherein the third message includes an identifier of the second end point module;

receiving, by the receiver, the third message;

determining, by the receiver, an identity of the second end point module based on the identifier of the third message to obtain a second determined identity; and

determining, by the receiver, frequency hopping information associated with a future fourth transmission by the second end point module based on the determined second identity of the second end point module to obtain second set of determined frequency hopping information;

wherein the step of predicting whether the future second transmission will be unsuccessful includes predicting whether any transmission collision will occur between the future second transmission by the first end point module, and the future fourth transmission by the second end point module.

*17.**3*
(Currently Amended) In an automatic meter reading (AMR) system comprising a plurality of utility meter end point modules that generate and transmit utility consumption data messages, and at least one AMR system reader configured to receive consumption data messages transmitted by the end point modules, a method of operating a first reader, the method comprising:

Application No. 09/911,840

determining a message arrival time for a future first message to be transmitted by a specific end point module;

predicting, by the first reader, whether the first message will be successfully communicated; and

adjusting reception activity of the first reader according to a result of the predicting-step.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, wherein the step of determining is based on an end point module message arrival list stored in the reader.

19. Cancelled.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
transmitting the first message by a first end point module on a first frequency hopping spread spectrum (FHSS) channel; and
prior to the step of transmitting, determining, by the first reader, that the first message will be arrive on the first FHSS channel.

6 Application No. 09/911,840
3

21. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising:
initializing the first reader, including establishing logic for handling any missed
end point module messages.

22. (Previously Presented) An automatic meter reading (AMR) system receiver for receiving
radio transmissions from a plurality of utility meter end point modules that generate and transmit
utility consumption data by way of frequency hopping spread spectrum transmission, the AMR
system receiver comprising:

a radio receiver; and

a controller programmed to:

maintain transmission profile information for ones of the plurality of end point
modules, the transmission profile representing at least a frequency
hopping pattern used by at least a first end point module;

operate the radio receiver to engage in radio communications with the first end
point module, wherein the radio communications include a first message
originated by the first end point module that includes an identifier of the
first end point module;

determine an identity of the first end point module based on the identifier of the
first message to obtain a first determined identity;

determine frequency hopping information associated with a future second
transmission by the first end point module based on the first determined
identity of the first end point module to obtain a first set of determined

Application No. 09/911,840

frequency hopping information;
predict whether the future second transmission will be unsuccessful based
on the first set of determined frequency hopping information; and
respond to a predicted unsuccessful future second transmission by adjusting the
radio communications with first end point module.

8
23. (Previously Presented) The AMR system receiver of claim 22, wherein the AMR system
receiver is of a type selected from the group consisting of: a repeater, and a base unit.

9
24. (Currently Amended) An automatic meter reading (AMR) system receiver for receiving
radio transmissions from a plurality of utility meter end point modules that generate and transmit
utility consumption data by way of frequency hopping spread spectrum transmission, the AMR
system receiver comprising:

a radio receiver; and
a controller programmed to:

determine an arrival time for a future first transmission to be transmitted
by a specific end point module;

produce a prediction of whether the first message will be successfully
communicated; and

adjust operation of the receiver according to the prediction.

Application No. 09/911,840

10
25. (Previously Presented) The AMR system receiver of claim 24, wherein the AMR system receiver is of a type selected from the group consisting of: a repeater, and a base unit.

11
26. (Previously Presented) The AMR system receiver of claim 24, wherein the controller maintains an endpoint module transmission arrival list.

27. Cancelled.

12
28. (Previously Presented) The AMR system receiver of claim 24, wherein the controller is configured with logic for handling any missed end point module transmissions.